

Good Afternoon,

My name is Krisztina Dearborn and I am currently double majoring in Physics and Mathematics at Central Connecticut State University. I will be graduating in May of next year (2014), thus I'll have been fortunate enough to finish two majors in four years. Thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony on Bill 844, "An Act Implementing the Budget Recommendations of the Governor Concerning Higher Education."

I am well aware that our Board of Regents receives the majority of its funding either directly from the state of Connecticut or from student's tuition. The Connecticut Mirror reported that in the last two years millions of dollars have been cut from the Connecticut State Universities System. I am now in my junior year as an out-of-state tuition payer the yearly amount I am required to pay in tuition has increased by \$1,127 since my freshman year. That is a 12% increase.

The reason I am writing in order to request that the Connecticut State Universities are not forced to endure more cuts to their funding is because this school has changed my life. I was almost unable to return to CCSU following my freshman year. During the spring semester of my freshman year I became financially independent of my parents and was faced with the prospect of paying for school all out of pocket. I was eighteen years old with a meager savings account and no idea what to do. I sought the help of the Physics department as well as other areas in order to find scholarships, I got a second job, took out loans, and utilized a payment plan in which I could break up the amount that I owed for each semester. The point is this—I have always been a good student with exceptional grades (I have a 3.86 cumulative grade point average here at CCSU), but I never imagined what it would feel like to potentially lose all of that. For this reason I work my hardest everyday, no excuse is worth blowing off a class or bombing a test.

As I approach my final year at Central I am thankful everyday that I was able to continue my education here. Since my freshman year I fell in love with this state and was able to change my residency to Connecticut, though I must still pay out-of-state tuition. In addition, I have even been inspired to apply to the CCSU Masters in Teaching program because I want to apply my enthusiasm for education toward helping students realize the skills they need to continue with higher-education. I want to make sure that other students who, like me, are exceptional students with unstable financial situations are given an opportunity to stay in school and not be forced out by tuition increases.

In short, please do not elect to cut funding to the Connecticut State Universities along with other community colleges in the state. I want to thank you for listening to my story.